5. Instructions have also been issued to the District Administration to ensure uninterrupted supply of food grains during the monsoons, exclusively in tribal areas/hill areas and remote places.

National debate of Minimum support price

2645. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that he has called for a national debate on the minimum support price of foodgrains; and

(b) if so, the factors that have influenced him for this ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN). (a) and (b) The Government is examining the possibilities of providing alternative methods of income support to the farmers so that they get the MSP for their crops. However, this is still in the nascent stage and no concrete proposal on this issue has been finalized.

BPL families in Gujarat

2646. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there are 21.20 lakh BPL families, as ascertained by the expert group methodology of Planning Commission in 1993-94;

(b) whether it is also a fact that on that basis Government of Gujarat receives monthly quota of wheat and rice for BPL families;

(c) the actual number of BPL families on the 31st December, 2000; and

(d) the figures of BPL families for which Government supply wheat and rice to Gujarat ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There are 21.20 lakh BPL families in the State of Gujarat as per the poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for the year 1993-94 on the basis of population projections of the Registrar General as on 1-3-2000. Government of Gujarat is receiving the monthly quota of wheat and rice on this basis.

(c) As reported by the Government of Gujarat, the actual number of BPL families identified as on 31-12-2000 were 33.89 lakhs.

(d) Government of India supplies wheat and rice to the State of Gujarat on the basis of 21.20 lakhs BPL families including Antyodaya families.

Sugar export

2647. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the country should export at least one million tonnes of white and raw sugar in 2001-2002 ;

(b) if so, whether it is more than what it was in 2000-2001;

(c) whether the country has surplus, stocks of white sugar of 11-12 million tonnes ;

(d) if so, efforts being made to export more sugar;

(e) the main buyers of sugar from India; and

(f) the steps taken to export sugar to these countries during 2001-2002 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V, SREENIVASA) : (a)and (b) In the 2000-2001 sugar season (October-September), the export of sugar is provisionally estimated, based on information from trade circles, at 12.5 lakh tonnes. It is difficult to indicate the minimum level of export of sugar during the 2000-2001 sugar season.

(c) The closing stock of sugar as on the close of 2000-2001 sugar season, on 30th September, 2001 is provisionally estimated at about 103 lakh tonnes.

(d) In order to boost export of sugar the Government has taken the following measures :—

- The quantitative restrictions on export of sugar have been lifted.
- The requirement of registration of quantity to be exported with the Agricultural Processed Food Export Development Agency (APDA) has been dispensed with.